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Pitcairn

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

Contents

		Page
	The Territory at a glance	3
I.	Constitutional, legal and political issues	4
	A. Electoral qualifications	4
	B. Judicial system and human rights	4
II.	Budget	6
III.	Economic and social conditions	6
	A. Transport	9
	B. Communications and power supply	9
	C. Land tenure	9
	D. Employment	9
	E. Education	10
	F. Health care	10
	G. Criminal justice	11

Note: The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Information was transmitted by the administering Power on 8 December 2016. Further details are contained in previous working papers, available from www.un.org/en/decolonization/workingpapers.shtml.

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IV. Environment 11
V. Relations with international organizations and partners 13
VI. Future status of the Territory 14
A. Position of the territorial Government 14
B. Position of the administering Power 14
VII. Action taken by the General Assembly 15

The Territory at a glance

Territory: Pitcairn is a Non-Self-Governing Territory under the Charter of the United Nations administered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Representative of administering Power: Governor: Jonathan Sinclair.

Geography: Pitcairn is located midway between New Zealand and the continent of South America at 25°S and 130°W. It comprises four islands: Pitcairn (the only inhabited island), Henderson, Ducie and Oeno.

Land area: 35.5 km^2 (Pitcairn Island: 4.35 km^2).

Exclusive economic zone (now a maritime protected area): 834,000 km^2.

Population: 39 (2016); this figure does not include the 12 individuals currently abroad.

Life expectancy at birth: Not available.

Languages: The official languages are English and Pitkern, a mixture of eighteenth-century English and Tahitian.

Capital: Adamstown, the only settlement.

Mayor: Shawn Christian

Main political parties: None.

Elections: Elections for the Island Council and Deputy Mayor are held every two years (most recent election: November 2015); elections for the Mayor, the head of the Council, are held every three years. The last Mayoral election was held on 9 November 2016.

Economy: The economy of Pitcairn is based largely on fishing, horticulture, the sale of stamps and handicrafts, beekeeping and honey production. Pitcairn receives budgetary aid from the United Kingdom.

Monetary unit: New Zealand dollar ($NZ).

Brief history: Pitcairn is named after Robert Pitcairn, a British midshipman who sighted it in 1767. The island was uninhabited when castaways from *HMS Bounty* (9 mutineers and 18 Polynesians) arrived there in 1790. Most of the inhabitants of Pitcairn today can trace their ancestry back to those mutineers.

I. Constitutional, legal and political issues

1. A new constitution came into effect in March 2010, replacing the Pitcairn Order 1970 and the Pitcairn Royal Instructions 1970. The Governor is appointed by the British Crown. In practice, the High Commissioner of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to New Zealand is appointed concurrently as Governor of Pitcairn, and overall responsibility for the administration of the island is accordingly vested in this function.

2. Under the Constitution, the Governor may make laws for the peace, order and good government of Pitcairn after consultation with the Island Council. Laws enacted by the Governor are styled ordinances. All ordinances are subject to disallowance by the British monarch, on the advice of the Secretary of State. The Government of the United Kingdom retains the general power to legislate directly for Pitcairn by an Act of Parliament or an Order in Council.

3. Islanders manage their internal affairs through the Island Council, the existence of which is enshrined in the Constitution and the composition and functions of which are established by the Local Government Ordinance (Laws of Pitcairn 2015 Revised edition). The Ordinance confers upon the Council the duty, subject to orders and directions of the Governor, to provide for the enforcement of the laws of Pitcairn and empowers it to make regulations for the good administration of Pitcairn, the maintenance of peace, order and public safety and the social and economic advancement of the islanders. According to the 2015 revised edition of the Ordinance, the Council consists of seven voting members (the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor and five Councillors, all elected) and three non-voting ex officio members (the Governor, the Deputy Governor and the Administrator (a role created in December 2014)). During elections held in November 2016, Shawn Christian was re-elected as Mayor.

A. Electoral qualifications

4. In order to vote for Island Officers, persons must be at least 18 years old, intend to remain on Pitcairn indefinitely and have been resident there for a specified period: one year if the person has a right of abode on Pitcairn or a spouse of someone otherwise entitled to vote; two years if a de facto marital partner of a person otherwise entitled to vote; or three years if normally resident on Pitcairn. Anyone who is eligible to vote may also stand for election to any of the island offices, so long as he or she has not been sentenced to imprisonment for three months or more in the past five years. The Island Secretary prepares the register of voters in September/October of each election year, and elections are held between the first and fifteenth days in November (inclusive).

B. Judicial system and human rights

5. The Island Magistrate is appointed by the Governor from among the residents of Pitcairn. Other magistrates, legally qualified in a Commonwealth country, are appointed to preside over the Magistrate's Court in matters beyond the powers of the Island Magistrate. The Magistrate's Court sits with two Assessors, except in

specified circumstances. The criminal jurisdiction of the Magistrate's Court is limited to offences triable summarily or either way, to committal proceedings and certain inquiries; and the magistrates have prescribed limits on their sentencing powers. The Magistrate's Court has jurisdiction in civil litigation up to a prescribed level. There is a right of appeal to the Supreme Court of Pitcairn, which is a superior court of record and has jurisdiction in criminal and civil cases beyond the competence of the Magistrate's Court. The Supreme Court is constituted by a judge sitting alone. The judges of the Supreme Court are the Chief Justice and up to four other judges. The Supreme Court may sit with assessors if it thinks it expedient or practical to do so. There are further rights of appeal to the Pitcairn Court of Appeal, which is comprised of a President, two or more Justices of Appeal and the Chief Justice, and to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

6. The Supreme Court has original jurisdiction over alleged breaches of the fundamental rights contained in the Constitution. It has power to make such declarations and orders as it considers appropriate for the purpose of upholding the rights, and may award damages. The Governor, as holder of the highest executive office, and the Chief Justice, as head of the judiciary, are responsible within their respective spheres of authority for overseeing the implementation of human rights on Pitcairn.

7. A child safety review conducted in 2015 highlighted the need for continued safeguarding measures on the island. In addition, 11 islanders graduated from the Child Protection Studies programme, a training course accredited by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority, between 2011 and 2013.

8. In the communiqué adopted at the fifth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, held in London on 1 and 2 November 2016, the United Kingdom and the overseas territories, including Pitcairn, agreed to work together to conduct a review of reservations to core United Nations human rights treaties ahead of the preparation of the report of the United Kingdom under the universal periodic review conducted by the Human Rights Council, to be submitted in 2017. They also committed themselves to working together to further develop the capacity of territories' national human rights institutions, where established, in line with international standards set out in the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles), and to deepening understanding of their shared obligations with regard to international human rights. In the same communiqué, it was noted that the leaders of the overseas territories had demonstrated their commitment to ensuring the highest standards of protection for children in the territories, including through the development of national response plans for safeguarding. In addition, the signing, including by the Government of Pitcairn, of a memorandum of understanding to promote more effective collaboration between the territories for the safeguarding of children was welcomed.

9. In the communiqué, the overseas territories and the United Kingdom reiterated their mutual determination to continue to tackle corruption, fraud, money laundering and financing of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction and to further enhance transparency and law enforcement cooperation in the context of financial services. They also reiterated their shared commitment to providing the leadership necessary to meet the June 2017 deadline for the implementation of new arrangements

regarding the exchange of beneficial ownership information on companies incorporated in their jurisdiction and to continuing to provide the highest levels of law enforcement cooperation possible before that date.

II. Budget

10. According to the United Kingdom, the 2015-2016 expenditure for Pitcairn, supported by the Department for International Development, was some £2.9 million. According to the Department, the budgetary aid covers citizens' reasonable assistance needs, ensuring the maintenance of a range of basic public services (e.g., electricity and telecommunications) and the provision of part-time public sector employment. Financial aid is also used for medical and educational services, as well as a shipping service that provides a necessary lifeline in terms of freight and passenger services. The prospect of self-sufficiency is very low in the case of Pitcairn because of its size and remoteness. The island's financial aid has increased by some 220 per cent over the past eight years, owing mainly to the cost of the new shipping service introduced in 2008, the associated costs of the four expatriate professionals (police officer, family and community adviser, teacher and doctor) and exchange rate fluctuations. The major recurrent expenditures include shipping and freight subsidies and the costs of off-island professionals who are employed to ensure continued child safeguarding and other medical, police, teaching and social welfare matters. The territorial allocation provided for Pitcairn under the ninth European Development Fund, which ran from 2008 to 2013, amounted to €2.4 million. Under the tenth European Development Fund, which covers the period 2014-2020, Pitcairn will be granted an indicative amount of €2.4 million.

III. Economic and social conditions

11. The principal source of income for the public economy had traditionally been the sale of stamps. Owing largely to a downturn in the stamp market, however, the island now receives budgetary assistance from the Department for International Development. A scaled-down stamp trade continues nonetheless, with six or seven new stamp issues released each year. Pitcairn coins (New Zealand mint) are another collector's item. Revenue is also generated from landing fees for tourist arrivals.

12. The Territory's income is also supplemented by the sale of Internet domain names. Internet users worldwide can acquire a ".pn" suffix that is permanently awarded to Pitcairn for, according to the territorial Government, a fee of $100 annually or $10 per month. Also available for purchase are the subdomains ".co.pn", ".net.pn" and ".org.pn", which cost $ 50 per year.

13. The private economy of Pitcairn is based on the manufacture and sale of handicrafts, some of which are available directly through the Internet. Bartering, mainly with passing ships, is also an important part of the economy. The island's fertile soil produces a wide variety of fruit and vegetables. Some islanders also provide a homestay service to tourists. Pitcairn has no hotels or motels. The Pitcairn Island Producers' Cooperative, established in 1999, promotes and coordinates the distribution of honey and honey products. According to data from the

Commonwealth Secretariat, a range of minerals, including manganese, iron, copper, gold, silver and zinc, have been discovered within the maritime protected area of Pitcairn. Exploitation of these minerals is prohibited under the maritime protected area ordinance.

14. The Government of Pitcairn has developed a five-year strategic development plan, covering the period 2012-2016, reviewed in 2014 and now covering the period 2014-2018, which sets out the views and aspirations of the islanders for the socioeconomic development of Pitcairn. It is based largely on efforts to boost revenue by increasing tourism, small business development and honey production. It is a living document and is frequently updated.

15. Three main challenges to socioeconomic development have been identified by the Department for International Development: the legacy of the child sexual abuse cases and the continuing need to maintain rigorous child protection measures; the ageing population and the declining share of the population that is economically active; and the lack of migration to the island.

16. With regard to the first challenge, the administering Power has put in place interventions to create a substantial child safeguarding framework, and independent reviews took place in 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015. The reviews recommended continued Government of the United Kingdom leadership and responsibility for overseeing child safety on Pitcairn, continued appropriate vetting of any adults intending to move to Pitcairn, the integration of child safeguarding into all future development planning for Pitcairn, regular review of children's development and circumstances and the continued management and monitoring of known sex offenders. The reviews also explicitly recommended that off-island professionals continue to be employed to implement child safeguarding procedures and protocols, with oversight by the administering Power.

17. Regarding the second challenge, of the resident population of 39, there are only 28 in paid employment, with only 8 of this paid employment group under 50, of whom only 1 is in the 20-30 age group. There are currently 26 people on the island over 50, 10 of whom are over 65. By 2025, the age dependency ratio (those under 18 and over 65, compared with the productive population) is expected to be more than 100 per cent, compared with the current ratio of 58 per cent. The situation is having an increasingly negative impact on economic production and health-care costs. The natural growth rate of the population is already beyond a sustainable replacement rate. In the period 2001-2012, there were only eight births and fewer than five women of childbearing age. The Department for International Development notes that, considering that there are only three options for increasing the population — children being born to islanders, the return of some of the diaspora and/or immigration to the island — this will continue to be a consideration in socioeconomic development planning for the foreseeable future. The implications of an ageing population for future financial aid rounds are that increasing funds will be required in the medium term to assist the ageing population.

18. With respect to the third challenge, in the second half of 2013, a survey was launched to ascertain whether members of the diaspora had any interest in returning to the Territory and the factors conditioning a decision.

19. According to the final report of the survey, presented in January 2014 by a consultancy firm, the overall response rate was 28 per cent (33 of 120 households). The following three barriers to potential returns were identified: the legacy of the child sexual abuse cases, acceptance of outsiders and new ideas and accessibility. No significant interest among members of the diaspora in returning to or investing in Pitcairn was identified, with only three respondents signalling an interest in living on Pitcairn permanently.

20. It was found that the child sexual abuse cases had created a clear reluctance on the part of members of the diaspora to publicly identify themselves as being from Pitcairn and sullied the Territory's reputation. The view was that on-island social norms did not conform to acceptable international norms. Reference was made to multigenerational (long-standing) inappropriate social behaviour. The survey also identified negative perceptions around the ability to bring children to the Territory and concerns regarding child protection issues. The need for a community reconciliation process was also identified. According to the administering Power and as of November 2016, preparation for such a process was taking place.

21. It was noted that acceptance of outsiders was a complex matter. There was a strong belief that outsiders were not welcomed and would not be able to integrate. Acceptance of outsiders with regard to being eligible and selected for government employment or introducing and/or expanding businesses, governance issues and the need for better structures and qualified people were also flagged as areas of concern.

22. It was also noted that accessibility was repeatedly mentioned as a barrier to immigration, especially in relation to factors such as health (medical evacuations), education and general isolation, an aspect that, according to the administering Power, is being looked into (as of December 2015).

23. The repopulation plan, covering the period 2014-2019, prepared by the Island Council, was aimed at attracting and retaining migrants and, to ensure its success, addressing areas such as housing, education and health. This has now been superseded by a new repopulation strategy. Like its predecessor, this new strategy recognizes the paramount importance of encouraging new migrants to Pitcairn to settle or work. In line with the strategic development plan, in September 2015, the Island Council approved an immigration policy designed to further promote immigration and repopulation, bringing people with the skills and commitment necessary to Pitcairn. According to official information provided by the Island Council, as at 10 August 2016, there were 451 repopulation enquiries from 42 countries and two active settlement applications logged with the Island Office. On 14 September, the Deputy Mayor informed the Council that there were two active settlement applications with the Deputy Governor and another two registered applicants on file with the Island Office.

24. According to the Department for International Development, in designing the Pitcairn financial aid intervention it considered the likely effect on reducing gender inequality. The Department also manages the key gender issue on the Territory, which is the legacy of child abuse, ensuring that robust child safeguarding mechanisms are in place. The financial aid intervention also provides for services

equally for all islanders, with specific attention given to the needs of children and older persons, as well as support and care for those with mental health issues.

A. Transport

25. Access to Pitcairn is possible only by sea. Currently, a shipping service runs from Mangareva in French Polynesia to the island eight times a year, with four freight runs directly from New Zealand. Cruise ships also call during the tourism season, which lasts from December to March. Ships visiting the island remain at anchor some distance from the shoreline and visitors are ferried to the island in longboats. According to information provided by the Government of the United Kingdom, plans are being taken forward to improve landing facilities, in particular for cruise ship passengers, given that tourism development is important for the future prosperity of Pitcairn. According to the European Union, an alternative landing facility, supported by the European Development Fund, is being constructed and is nearly complete.

B. Communications and power supply

26. The communications system installed in 2006 provided the island with telephones in all homes, a satellite Internet system, one television channel and videoconferencing facilities. The system was upgraded in 2011. According to the administering Power, Internet communication is slow, lacks bandwidth and, at times, is unreliable. It is also very expensive to run. Currently, diesel-powered generators provide 240-volt electric power for 15 hours per day (7 a.m.-10 p.m.).

C. Land tenure

27. A land tenure reform ordinance was enacted at the end of 2006 to ensure that every islander was entitled to an allocation of house, garden, orchard and forestry land. According to the administering Power, this will be reviewed in the near future. More detailed information on land distribution issues is provided in the 2005 working paper (A/AC.109/2005/10).

D. Employment

28. There is a mixture of government employment and self-employment. Under the new governance structure, introduced in April 2009, most of the working-age inhabitants have at least one part-time government job. According to the administering Power, private enterprise is increasing and is encouraged by the Government of Pitcairn. There are no banks on the island, but cash may be drawn against credit cards and foreign currency may be exchanged at the Government Treasurer's office. In November 2015, the Island Council approved an employment policy and an employment guidance. The policy is intended to support the ability of the Government to meet its objectives within the strategic development plan and provides a solid platform for recruitment, performance management, disciplinary

procedures and dispute resolution within the Pitcairn public service. Also in November 2015, an occupational health and safety policy was approved by the Island Council. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all employees, contractors and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities to the Government and are committed to ensuring the health and well-being of employees, contractors, volunteers and the Pitcairn Island community.

E. Education

29. Education is free and compulsory for all children between 5 and 15 years of age. The only school was completely rebuilt in 2006. Instruction is in English and based on the New Zealand standard curriculum. The Education Officer is a qualified teacher recruited from New Zealand, usually for a one-year term. For practical reasons, most children attend post-primary education at schools in New Zealand. Overseas secondary education is encouraged through the granting of bursaries, and a number of pupils have received secondary education in New Zealand at the expense of the Government of Pitcairn. Since 2007, citizens from the overseas territories have benefited from the home student fee rate at British universities. In August 2015, the Island Council approved an education policy to provide equal and impartial educational opportunities for the Pitcairn Islands community. Students from overseas territories benefit from the home student rate for school fees at British universities provided that they have lived in a British overseas territory, the European Economic Area or Switzerland for the three years prior to the first academic year of their course of study.

30. Pitcairn has a museum, which was built using funds from a grant from the Government of the United Kingdom. Artefacts on display include stone tools made by Polynesians before the arrival of the mutineers, together with cannonballs, an anchor and a swivel gun from HMS *Bounty*. The Seventh-Day Adventist Church is the only church on the island.

F. Health care

31. A general practitioner is stationed on the island on a one-year contract, assisted by an assistant nurse. The Government of the United Kingdom has also funded a social welfare programme, which includes a family and community adviser. As on other Pacific islands, obesity and diabetes are health problems.

32. In the communiqué adopted at the fifth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the United Kingdom Department of Health's commitment to working in partnership with the territories and Public Health England to raise awareness of international health regulations and identify the tools and technical assistance required to enable the territories to strengthen compliance was welcomed. It was agreed to take forward a programme of joint work to support the territories' capacity and delivery of emergency response plans, including for pandemic outbreaks, and to deliver the tools, technical assistance and resources, where appropriate, to support the territories in promoting public health, taking account of the challenges faced by small and remote communities. The need to improve communications between the Department of Health and territories on health-related

matters was emphasized and potential solutions, including the development of telemedicine were discussed.

33. According to the multi-country cooperation strategy for the Pacific 2013-2017 of the World Health Organization, the leading causes of morbidity on Pitcairn include diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular disease, allergies and asthma. Pitcairn actively participates in the Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network and closely monitors communicable diseases. Primary health care is available and accessible to all residents. Health care is financed by the Department for International Development. A growing health-related challenge is the extension of periods of drought. The health centre is equipped with a well-stocked dispensary and X-ray technology. The health worker-to-population ratio is 1:47.

G. Criminal justice

34. According to the United Kingdom, the criminal justice system on Pitcairn is administered through a combination of on-island and off-island processes. Criminal law is contained in local ordinances and regulations, as well as in English law of general application. Charges are laid by a police officer or the public prosecutor. Pitcairn has two police officers: a community police officer appointed from among the island residents and an officer who is recruited from New Zealand, usually for a period of 12 months. The public prosecutor is a lawyer qualified in a Commonwealth country.

35. A public defender is appointed by the Governor to represent defendants in criminal cases, and legal aid is available to any person who has insufficient means to obtain legal representation. A publicly funded community lawyer has also been appointed.

36. More minor criminal matters involving breaches of local ordinances or regulations can be heard before the Island Magistrate. Other summary offences and committal proceedings may be heard before the off-island magistrates in the Magistrate's Court. Magistrates must sit with assessors, selected randomly from among the island residents, for all criminal cases with penalties of more than $NZ 400, unless the defendant has admitted guilt or there are no eligible assessors. Indictable offences must be heard in the Supreme Court.

37. The Magistrate's Court and the Supreme Court may sit in Pitcairn, New Zealand or the United Kingdom. To allow for the distances and difficulty of travel to and from Pitcairn, a judge may order that a person involved in a proceeding participate by live video link. In making an order, the judge is required to give particular consideration to the impact of this on the defendant's right to a fair trial. Appeals can be made to the Court of Appeal and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Work is currently being carried out to further improve criminal procedure and the accessibility of the law and the courts.

IV. Environment

38. Water-quality testing is carried out in all residential and government buildings and data are recorded. Leaf catchers, first flush diverters and gutter guards have

been installed at all residential and government buildings to reduce contaminates. Water flow measurement data are collected from various springs and the secretariat of the Pacific Community is assisting in collating the data and providing technical assistance. A total of 240 water tanks, with a total storage capacity of 1.4 million litres, have been provided, for an overall increase of 268,000 litres. Weather observations are collected on a daily basis, and weather data have been collected since 1945. The secretariat of the Pacific Community provides technical assistance with graphs and averages.

39. In 2015, the Government of the United Kingdom launched its "Blue Belt" initiative, which, according to the administering Power, seeks to ensure that the marine environments around the overseas territories are managed in a way that minimizes environmental threats and provides resilience, as far as practicable, to environmental change, while enabling marine resources to be used for the benefit of local economies in a sustainable way.

40. As part of this initiative, on 15 September 2016, the Minister of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office announced that a law designating a marine protected area around the Pitcairn Islands had been brought into force. The administering Power indicated that the law prohibits fishing across more than 99 per cent of the 834,000 square km of ocean surrounding the Islands, while sustainable local fishing by Pitcairn residents will be preserved.

41. A goat eradication programme was carried out in May 2014, although some goats were left for pets or food.

42. The overseas territories biodiversity strategy of the United Kingdom has been devised as a key tool to enable the United Kingdom and overseas territorial Governments to meet the relevant international obligations for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. In April 2014, a report was published about ongoing and planned activities that are supported by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development of the Government of the United Kingdom, as well as its statutory adviser, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, in each of the areas under the strategy. It was noted that the Government of the United Kingdom had awarded £249,946 through the Darwin Initiative to develop a sustainable marine and fisheries management plan for Pitcairn. The project, led by the University of Dundee, will produce a fully operational fisheries and marine management plan that is ecosystem-based and sustainable, which is crucial to providing a secure future for the community and protecting the unique marine biodiversity of Pitcairn. According to the administering Power, this project was near completion as of December 2016.

43. The uninhabited island of Henderson, designated a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 1988, is the largest of the group and the richest in natural resources of the three satellite islands. Environmentalists visit Henderson from time to time, given that it is known for its endemic species of birds and plants in a near-pristine system. In 2011, a non-governmental organization led a project to eradicate rats, which were threatening the bird population. However, the project, to which the Government of the United Kingdom contributed more than £400,000, was unsuccessful and rats remain on the island. The Government of the United Kingdom and the relevant

stakeholders are investigating. On 12 September 2016, a report of the monitoring expedition conducted in 2015 by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds to assess the situation was published. According to the report, while the reason for the unsuccessful eradication is unknown, the expedition identified a number of issues that need to be resolved before another eradication attempt is conducted. The report contains a recommendation that another scientific expedition will be necessary to assess the operational feasibility of another operation. According to public sources, the rat population is back to levels before the eradication project.

44. In the communiqué adopted at the fifth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, in 2016, the Government of the United Kingdom and the overseas territories recognized the impact that climate change had on the economies, infrastructure and ecosystems of the territories and the important interest of the overseas territories in international efforts to combat and mitigate the effects of climate change. The Government of the United Kingdom committed itself to consulting territorial Governments on the issue of the application of the Paris Agreement to the territories. It reiterated its full commitment to consulting the overseas territories ahead of its participation in international forums on climate change to ensure that their priorities were taken into account and to include them in delegations, where appropriate, while welcoming the territories' links with regional and international organizations.

V. Relations with international organizations and partners

45. Since January 2014, Pitcairn has been a partner under decision 2013/755/EU of the Council of the European Union on the association of the overseas countries and territories with the European Union, approved, among other things, in an effort to move away from a classic development cooperation approach to a reciprocal partnership that promotes sustainable development and the values and standards of the European Union in the wider world.

46. Pitcairn is a member of the Pacific Community, which is the oldest and largest organization in the 10-member Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific, a consultative process that is headed at the political level by the Pacific Islands Forum secretariat. The secretariat of the Pacific Community provides technical assistance, policy advice, training and research services to 22 Pacific island countries and territories in such areas as health, human development, agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Pitcairn also participates in the Pacific Community Coastal Fisheries Programme. The following international conventions have been extended to Pitcairn: the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In May 2016, the Island Council formally requested the extension of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to Pitcairn. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Government Equalities Office are liaising with Pitcairn as part of the extension process.

47. At the fifth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, in 2016, the United Kingdom committed itself to involving Gibraltar and the overseas territories as it prepared for negotiations to leave the European Union in accordance with their various constitutional relationships with the United Kingdom, to ensure that their priorities were taken into account.

VI. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of the territorial Government

48. The most recent statement by a representative of the island's Mayor was made during the Pacific regional seminar on advancing the decolonization process in the Pacific region, held in Madang, Papua New Guinea, from 18 to 20 May 2004. The statement is summarized in the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples for 2004 (A/59/23).

B. Position of the administering Power

49. At the 7th meeting of the Fourth Committee, on 10 October 2016, during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, the representative of the United Kingdom stated that the relationship of the Government of the United Kingdom with its overseas territories was a modern one based on partnership, shared values and the right of the people of each Territory to choose to remain British.

50. He went on to say that, since the publication in June 2012 by the Government of the United Kingdom of a white paper entitled *The Overseas Territories: Security, Success and Sustainability*, his Government had worked closely with the overseas territories to further develop those partnerships. At annual meetings of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the United Kingdom and the territories reviewed strategy and commitments and, in 2015, the United Kingdom had affirmed its commitment to the advancement of the peoples of the territories, their just treatment and protecting them from abuses and the importance of promoting their right to self-determination. His Government's fundamental responsibility was to ensure the security and good governance of the territories and their peoples.

51. In the communiqué adopted at the fifth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the Government of the United Kingdom and the leaders of the overseas territories stated that the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, applied to the peoples of the overseas territories. They reaffirmed the importance of promoting the right of the peoples of the territories to self-determination, a collective responsibility of all parts of the Government of the United Kingdom. They committed themselves to exploring ways in which the overseas territories could maintain international support in countering hostile sovereignty claims. It was also stated that, should a territory with permanent populations wish it, the United Kingdom would continue to support its request to be removed from the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. They agreed that the fundamental structure of their

constitutional relationships was the right one — powers were devolved to the elected Governments of the territories to the maximum extent possible consistent with the United Kingdom retaining those powers necessary to discharge its sovereign responsibilities. They also agreed upon the need to continue their engagement on those issues to ensure that constitutional arrangements worked effectively to promote the best interests of the territories and of the United Kingdom.

VII. Action taken by the General Assembly

52. On 6 December 2016, the General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution 71/115 on the basis of the report of the Special Committee the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples for 2016 (A/71/23) and on the subsequent recommendation by the Fourth Committee. In that resolution, the Assembly:

(a) Reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of Pitcairn to self-determination, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

(b) Also reaffirmed that, in the process of the decolonization of Pitcairn, there is no alternative to the principle of self-determination, which is also a fundamental human right, as recognized under the relevant human rights conventions;

(c) Further reaffirmed that it is ultimately for the people of Pitcairn to determine freely their future political status in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter, the Declaration and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and in that connection called upon the administering Power, in cooperation with the territorial Government and appropriate bodies of the United Nations system, to develop political education programmes for the Territory in order to foster an awareness among the people of their right to self-determination in conformity with the legitimate political status options, based on the principles clearly defined in Assembly resolution 1541 (XV) and other relevant resolutions and decisions;

(d) Welcomed all efforts by the administering Power and the territorial Government that would further devolve operational responsibilities to the Territory, with a view to gradually expanding self-government, including through the training of local personnel;

(e) Requested the administering Power to assist the Territory by facilitating its work concerning public outreach efforts, consistent with Article 73 *b* of the Charter, and in that regard called upon the relevant United Nations organizations to provide assistance to the Territory, if requested;

(f) Also requested the administering Power to continue its assistance for the improvement of the economic, social, educational and other conditions of the population of the Territory and to continue its discussions with the territorial

Government on how best to support socioeconomic and environmental security in Pitcairn, including as regards demographic matters;

(g) Welcomed the work carried out on the preparation of the five-year strategic development plan for the island;

(h) Stressed the importance of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples being apprised of the views and wishes of the people of Pitcairn and enhancing its understanding of their conditions, including the nature and scope of the existing political and constitutional arrangements between Pitcairn and the administering Power;

(i) Called upon the administering Power to participate in and cooperate fully with the work of the Special Committee in order to implement the provisions of Article 73 *e* of the Charter and the Declaration and in order to advise the Committee on the implementation of the provisions under Article 73 *b* of the Charter on efforts to promote self-government in Pitcairn, and encouraged the administering Power to facilitate visiting and special missions to the Territory;

(j) Reaffirmed the responsibility of the administering Power under the Charter to promote the economic and social development and to preserve the cultural identity of the Territory, and requested the administering Power to take steps to enlist and make effective use of all possible assistance, on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis, in the strengthening of the economy of the Territory;

(k) Took into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals, stressed the importance of fostering the economic and social sustainable development of the Territory by promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion and promoting the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems that supports, inter alia, economic, social and human development, while facilitating ecosystem conservation, regeneration, restoration and resilience in the face of new and emerging challenges, and strongly urged the administering Power to refrain from undertaking any kind of illicit, harmful and unproductive activities, including the use of the Territory as a tax haven, that are not aligned with the interest of the people of the Territory;

(l) Requested the Territory and the administering Power to take all measures necessary to protect and conserve the environment of the Territory against any degradation, and once again requested the specialized agencies concerned to monitor environmental conditions in the Territory and to provide assistance to the Territory, consistent with their prevailing rules of procedure;

(m) Requested the Special Committee to continue to examine the question of Pitcairn and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session and on the implementation of the present resolution.